

Washington, DC –Today, Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez released the following statement in response to the fact sheets the White House issued regarding the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement and Action Plan.

“It is a good first step that Colombia will reform its labor laws and begin to crack down on violence against union organizers. However, it is a first step that does not make it safe to be a union member or human rights advocate in Colombia.

“Before Congress even considers a trade agreement with Colombia, Colombia must demonstrate that it is actually protecting labor unionists, human rights advocates, Afro-Colombians, and indigenous peoples. On top of that, the underlying Colombia Free Trade Agreement requires serious changes before it comes before Congress.

“We have to protect the ability of American families to make decent wages and small businesses to compete fairly against global conglomerates. American families can't afford to have their jobs shipped overseas to countries, like Colombia, where wages are kept oppressively low.

“Simply put, this Colombia Free Trade Agreement is a bad deal for American workers, who deserve better.”

Congresswoman Sánchez is a co-founder and co-chair of the Congressional Labor and Working Families Caucus. Congresswoman Sánchez also serves on President Obama's Export Council. Last month, Congresswoman Sánchez joined Representatives George Miller, Jim McGovern, Rosa DeLauro, Michael Michaud, and Jan Schakowsky to write a letter and memo to President Obama laying out the labor standards Colombia must meet before Congress considers ratifying a free trade agreement with Colombia.

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